

REMARKS

I. Introduction

In response to the Office Action dated March 25, 2003, claim 24 has been amended and new claims 30-32 have been added. Claims 1-32 remain in the application. Re-examination and re-consideration of the application, as amended, is requested.

II. Claim Amendments

Applicants' attorney has made amendments to the claims as indicated above. These amendments were made solely for the purpose of clarifying the language of the claims, and were not required for purposes of patentability.

III. Information Disclosure Statement

An information disclosure statement was filed by the Applicants on July 22, 1999. However, this information disclosure statement does not appear to have been considered by the Examiner. A copy of this information disclosure statement and the related transmittal materials (including a returned postcard) is attached to this Amendment. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner indicate whether this information disclosure statement was received and considered, and in the event it was not, consider the references as appropriate.

IV. Drawings

FIG. 1 has been amended to comply with margin requirements.

V. The Cited References and the Subject Invention

A. The Anglin Reference

U.S. Patent No. 5,892,591, issued April 6, 1999 to Anglin, Jr. et al., discloses Facsimile transmission via packet switched data networks. A document (3200) which is to be transmitted to a recipient is fed into a local facsimile machine (3100). The document (3200) includes a cover sheet (3210) containing a destination facsimile number (5100) and number of sheets which contain the message to be transmitted to the destination. The sender then dials the local telephone number of a

remote computer system (2000). The document (3200) is then transmitted to the remote computer (2000) via a modem (2400) over a local telephone line (7000). The remote computer (2000) then scans the cover sheet (3210) and extracts the destination facsimile number (5100). The document (3200) is then formatted for transmission via public switched data network, specifically Internet backbone network(s) (6000), and is routed from the remote computer system (2000) to a host network computer system (4000). The document is then routed via the Internet (6000) to a remote computer system (4100) near the destination facsimile, and ultimately is delivered to its destination (5100).

B. The Berkley Reference

U.S. Patent Publication No. 2002/0131573, issued September 19, 2002 to Berkley et al., discloses an Active User Registry system comprising a database which is integrated with the POTS network and a packet network (such as the Internet, or a corporate intranet). Integrating AUR with the POTS network and a packet network exploits the outstanding strengths of both of its constituents, such as the low-latency, high reliability, moderate fidelity real-time voice telephony provided by the POTS network, and the point-and-click access to distributed databases with excellent search capabilities provided by a packet network, such as the Internet (including those made available using browser technology in conjunction with the World Wide Web). The AUR database contains a dynamic data structure (such as a linked list or a hashed table) of all the ways in which one or more users can be reached via some type of communication network (e.g., through the POTS network or a packet network, or both). A key feature of the AUR is the ability to broker between a subscriber's request for communications contact information corresponding to a user and the user's preferences of being reached by various communications alternatives. Other features may be included with the AUR, including an AUR cache which provides subscribers with rapid-access entry points into the AUR, or automatic updating of user contact information. Further, the capability of learning the user's preferences is included as an additional feature and is also included as a feature in an alternative embodiment of the present invention.

C. The Brossman Reference

U.S. Patent No. 6,498,661, issued December 24, 2002 to Brossman et al., discloses a method and apparatus for rendering grayscales at a facsimile presentation device using a calibrated threshold matrix. In one embodiment of the invention, the method comprises the steps of receiving a presentation job comprising input data associable with at least one input grayscale value, retrieving at least one of a plurality of threshold matrices, each threshold matrix selected to control a grayscale rendering characteristic of the facsimile presentation device associated with the threshold matrix, applying the grayscale values to the retrieved threshold matrix to rasterize the input data, and transmitting the rasterized input data to the facsimile presentation device. This invention can be practiced in several embodiments, and permits the user to select the threshold matrix according to the presentation device and/or a selected presentation quality. In another embodiment of the invention, the apparatus comprises a means for receiving a presentation job having input data associable with at least one input grayscale value, means for retrieving at least one of a plurality of threshold matrices, each threshold matrix selected to control a grayscale rendering characteristic of the facsimile presentation device associated with the threshold matrix, means for applying the grayscale values to the retrieved threshold matrix to rasterize the input data, and means for transmitting the rasterized input data to the facsimile presentation device.

D. The Reifman Reference

U.S. Patent No. 5,917,615, issued June 29, 1999 to Reifman et al., discloses a system and method for facsimile load balancing. A user interface simplifies operation of an intelligent facsimile machine (IFAX). A display screen displays a plurality of menus and allows the user to select from the menus. The IFAX can store a plurality of digital cover pages to minimize transmission time for a facsimile cover page. The user may select from a list of stored digital cover pages. The user may also attach a binary data file to a facsimile message and transfer the data to another facsimile machine. The IFAX uses a storage location for storing outgoing facsimile messages. The IFAX periodically check the storage location to determine if more than one facsimile message is to be transmitted to the same location and transmits the facsimile messages in one facsimile telephone call. If the IFAX is coupled to a second IFAX on a network, the two IFAX machines can balance the work load by sending a load transfer request if the number of outgoing facsimile messages exceeds a

predetermined threshold level. The IFAX can also route incoming facsimile messages to a variety of destinations such as a floppy disk or other storage device, or an external computer. The IFAX can also relay incoming facsimile messages to another facsimile machine, using a set or relay instructions. The relay instructions may be stored in the IFAX or may be a portion of the incoming facsimile message. The relay instructions may be nested, and the IFAX sends the facsimile message to a second IFAX with instructions for the second IFAX to relay the facsimile message to a third facsimile machine. The IFAX contains security measures to prevent unauthorized relaying

E. The Bobo Reference

U.S. Patent No. 5,675,507, issued October 7, 1997 to Bobo II, discloses a message storage and delivery system (MSDS) connected to a plurality of DID phone lines that receives facsimile messages, voice messages, and data messages. The MSDS assigns a separate telephone number for each user of the system and can simultaneously receive more than one message for a single user. The messages are stored in memory and are also converted into appropriate hyper-text mark-up language (HTML) files. The MSDS is connected to the Internet and notifies the users with an E-mail message each time a message is received. The MSDS can also page the user so that the user receives almost instantaneous notice of the message. The users can then connect to the MSDS through the Internet and have the messages downloaded to their computers or the users can simply preview the messages stored in the MSDS. The users of the MSDS therefore have the advantage of being able to receive their messages at any time and at any location at a reasonable cost. The MSDS offers a number of options on how the messages may be sent to the user, such as several preview options available with facsimile messages. The user can also telephone the MSDS to listen to messages or to alter the service provided by the MSDS.

F. The Choksi Reference

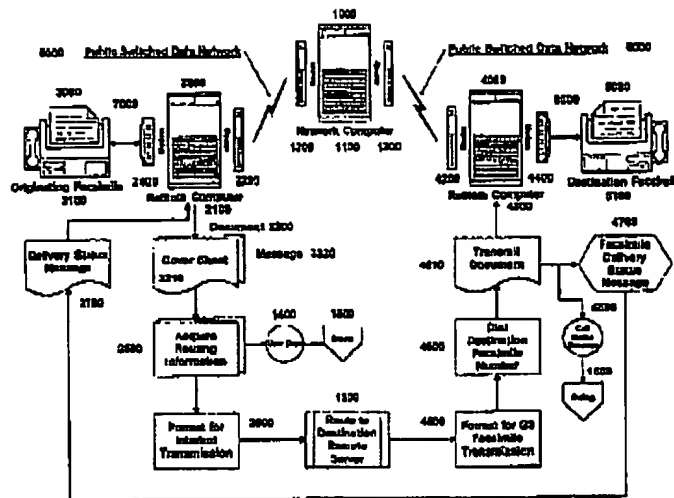
U.S. Patent No. 6,477,243, issued November 5, 2002 to Choksi et al., discloses a method and apparatus for automated facsimile message confirmation. Integration of telecommunication message services and other communication services is achieved by notifying a user of a communication system of successful receipt of a message (e.g., a facsimile message) by sending a confirmation message to the user, e.g., using e-mail, facsimile, voice and/or data communications. The user may

be identified by a unique identifier, e.g., a telephone number. The confirmation message may comprise a facsimile message, an attachment which includes the received message or a computer network address of a location where information regarding the received message and/or the message itself may be accessed. For the latter case, the computer network address is preferably a universal resource locator (URL) associated with a web page at which the information and/or received message may be accessed. The information may allow the user to view the message (e.g., as marked up by the intended recipient thereof), and/or it may indicate whether the intended recipient has read, reviewed, down-loaded to a hard copy or other device or otherwise accessed the message.

VI. Office Action Prior Art Rejections

On page (2), the Office Action rejected claims 1, 4, 5, 8, 11, 14, 15, 18, 21, 24, and 27 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Anglin et al., U.S. Patent No. 5,892,591 (Anglin).

The Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections. Boiled to its essence, the Anglin reference discloses a system which transmits data from an originating facsimile machine to a destination facsimile machine. The Anglin reference differs from traditional facsimile transmission in that instead of simply dialing the destination facsimile machine and transmitting the information directly via the PSTN, the Anglin reference discloses a system wherein the originating facsimile machine 3100 uses computer systems (2000 and 4000) coupled by a packet-switched Internet backbone to transmit the information instead of ordinary modulated data transmission via the PSTN. Instead of dialing the destination facsimile machine directly from the originating facsimile machine, the originating facsimile machine is used to dial a remote computer. The remote computer receives the facsimile, and scans the cover sheet to recover the destination facsimile number. The facsimile and destination facsimile number is transmitted to a second computer system 4000 via the Internet. The second computer dials the destination facsimile number (scanned from the cover page by the remote computer 2000 and transmits the document to the destination facsimile machine. The process is represented in the figure below:



In contrast, the present invention is directed to a system that delivers incoming messages from transmitting facsimile machines to recipients according to a recipient fax preference determined from the recipient's direct-dial telephone number.

With Respect to Claims 1, 11, and 17:

With the foregoing in mind, we now turn to claim 1. According to the Office Action, the Anglin reference discloses the step of:

receiving a message from a transmitting facsimile via a telephone network, the message comprising receiving fax server telephone number appended with a recipient direct dial telephone number

as follows:

As shown in FIGS. 1, 2 and 3, to send a document 3200 to a recipient, a user of the present invention first feeds a document into his or her facsimile machine 3100. The document includes (1) a cover sheet 3210 containing information about the user 1400 and the destination facsimile number 4600 and (2) a plurality of sheets comprising the message 3220 to be transmitted to the destination into the input hopper of the facsimile machine 3100. The user then dials the local telephone number of the remote computer system 2000.

When the modem in the facsimile machine 3100 connects to the modem in the remote computer system 2400 via a local telephone line 7000, the document is transmitted to the remote computer 2100. Software within the remote computer 2100 scans the cover sheet 3210. An algorithm embedded in the software identifies the location on the cover sheet where the destination facsimile telephone number is printed, either typewritten or handwritten. Optical character recognition ("OCR") software scans the area containing the destination facsimile telephone number. This number is stored at a specific location within the remote computer file which comprises the document 3200 in digital form.

A plurality of user data 1400 including, for example, the sender's name, voice telephone number, originating facsimile number, account number, number of pages comprising the document 2100, recipient name, recipient

voice telephone number and the like, is likewise obtained from the cover sheet 3210. This data is appended to the remote computer file which comprises the document 3200 to be delivered to a billing program 1500. (col. 5, line 66- col. 6, line 28)

The Applicants respectfully disagree that the foregoing step is disclosed in the Anglin reference. The first phrase refers to receiving a message from a transmitting facsimile via a telephone network, wherein the message comprises a fax server telephone number appended with a recipient direct dial telephone number. No entity in the Anglin reference receives a message having these features.

The only entity that receives a message from a transmitting facsimile via a telephone network is the remote computer system 2000. However, that message is not appended with the recipient's direct dial telephone number. While the Anglin reference teaches scanning the cover page of the facsimile transmission to obtain the recipient's telephone number, that feat is performed by the remote computer system 2000 itself ... the remote server system 2000 does not receive a message with the recipient direct dial telephone number.

According to the Office Action, the step of *automatically parsing the message to extract the recipient direct dial telephone number from the message* is disclosed as follows :

When the document 3200 in digital form is received in the remote computer 4100, software resident in the remote computer 4100 formats the received document 3200 for facsimile transmission 4500. The destination facsimile number is extracted from the document 3200 in digital form and sent to a modem 4400 which dials it. When the modem 4400 in the remote computer system 4000 connects to the modem in the destination facsimile machine 5100 via a local telephone line 8000, the document is transmitted to the destination facsimile machine 5100. If the destination facsimile number is busy or otherwise unavailable, the document 3200 in digital form is stored in the remote computer system 4000 until it is delivered or it is determined that delivery is impossible. (col. 6, lines 40-54)

The foregoing discloses extracting the facsimile telephone number of the recipient, not the direct dial telephone number.

As the Office Action recognizes, the Anglin reference does not disclose determining an e-mail address and at least one fax preference from the direct dial telephone number, processing the fax payload according to the fax preference, and directing the fax message according to the recipient fax preference. However, according to the Office Action, the Berkley reference discloses a system with the ability to "broker between a subscriber's request for communications contact information and the user's preferences of being reached by various communications alternatives." However, while the Berkley

reference arguably shows directing a message according to user-defined preferences, nothing in the Berkley reference discloses processing a fax message according to recipient fax messages.

The Applicants also respectfully disagree that there is a teaching to combine the Anglin and Berkley references. The Anglin reference teaches a fax-machine to fax-machine transfer of information. It does not disclose or suggest the transfer of information anywhere but the desired location. Anglin teaches that the routing information is disposed on the fax cover sheet itself, and that this information alone is used to route the document to route the information to a remote computer system 4000 near the destination facsimile 5000 (col. 6, lines 35-39). The ostensible purpose of this feature is to avoid long distance dialing fees (see col. 2, lines 34-48), a purpose that would be largely frustrated if the user were permitted to redirect the fax to another remote location. It is therefore untrue that this feature would enhance Anglin's design. It would instead provide an option that is unneeded and unwanted.

VII. Dependent Claims

Dependent claims 2-10, 12-20, and 22-29 incorporate the limitations of their related independent claims, and are therefore patentable on this basis. In addition, these claims recite novel elements even more remote from the Anglin and Berkley references, and are not disclosed in the Brossman, Reifman, Bobo, and Chokski references. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully request that these claims be allowed as well.

VIII. New Claims

New claims 30-32 are presented for the first time in this Amendment. For the reasons described above, new claims 30-32 are patentable over the prior art of record, and the Applicants respectfully request the allowance of these claims as well.

IX. Conclusion

In view of the above, it is submitted that this application is now in good order for allowance and such allowance is respectfully solicited. Should the Examiner believe minor matters still remain that can be resolved in a telephone interview, the Examiner is urged to call Applicants' undersigned attorney.

Respectfully submitted,

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